NARRATIVE

OF

M. DE CHAUMEREIX,

WHO ESCAPED FROM THE

MASSACRES OF AURAI AND VANNES,

AFTER

THE EXPEDITION OF QUIBERON,

WITH

OBSERVATIONS ON THE PUBLIC OPINION IN BRITTANY.

TO WHICH IS ADDED A

PROSPECTUS FOR PASIGRAPHY;

OR,

FIRST ELEMENTS

OF THE

ART OF PRINTING AND WRITING IN A LANGUAGE TO BE UNDERSTOOD IN ALL LANGUAGES WITHOUT TRANSLATION.

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1795.

BRITISH MUSEUM

NARRATIVE

OF

M. DECHAUMEREIX.

INTRODUCTION.

IF the recital of the dangers from which I have had the happiness of escaping was not connected with the disasters of the French Revolution, I should not have had an idea of occupying the public attention. And in delineating them, far be it from me to expect that interest which belongs to more unfortunate victims. Nobler motives animate me, and I cede to a superior view.

Great crimes have followed an easy victory; but shall I accuse my country, or its tyrants?—The public opinion, still uncertain, will shortly decide.

France, for three years past, seems but to offer tyrants and slaves, executioners and victims. Liberal and generous minds turn their attention from the afflicting picture, and hearts of sensibility tremble to pause at it.—I repose on other images where the tenderest humanity shines with all the noble and courageous virtues that accompany it.

The massacres of Vannes were ordered by the party then in power in the Convention.—The army revolted at the idea, and they have excited universal indignation.—The French name will not be sullied by this crime, for it should be added to that immense list, by means of which the Convention perpetuated its sanguinary tyranny.

A capitulation was made—it has been violated—cruelty invoked perfidy.

Escaped, I may say, almost solely from these massacres, it became a sacred duty for me to make its authors known.—Who can separate himself from the glory of his country?—But gentler sentiments have led me on—I was impatient to pay an homage of love and gratitude to those generous benefactors who braved so many dangers to snatch me from death. Oh! my friends! this

this homage comes from a foreign country, it is true, but where virtue is honoured and misfortune respected. I wish to present your names to every feeling heart, but am forced to hide them —for alas, there are still tyrants in my native land.

' And you, affecting victims of honour and fidelity!—I have seen your sublime sacrifices!—I faithfully depict them—you are no more, but your blood has flowed for your King—It has been shed in those noble countries where his sacred name is so often invoked.—Yet a while, and the day shall come when even there your avengers shall arise!—You merited to conquer in the fields of la Vendée!—Console yourselves, illustrious shades! You are associated in the glory of its heros! '

This relation is entirely foreign to the expedition of Quiberon, which has too much divided the opinions and soured the minds of men to admit that the moment is yet arrived to treat of that event. It commences with the capture of the Fort, including a space of two months, from July 1st to the 21st of September. I have divided it into different epochs, each of which form the subject of a separate chapter.

I shall conclude by some observations which I either made on the spot, or gathered from the conversation of men of all parties. I do not pretend to draw from thence a conclusion for the rest of France. They are centered in a small circle—and I must moreover remark, that the department of Morbihan is the most famous for the progress of royalty.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

CAPTURE OF THE FORT—CAPITULATION.

JULY 21, at five o'clock in the morning, the general beat. The corps not on duty at Fort-Penthièvre were in cantonments; the regiment of Hector instantly assembled, and M. Soulange put himself at our head, although he had been grievously wounded at the affair of the 16th. We directed our march to the little mill where M. de Sombreuil was already in order of battle with his division. We were ignorant of the capture of Fort-Penthièvre, imagining it had only been attacked. M. de Sombreuil had scarcely given orders, before we perceived the republicans, marching in three columns: directing their attention both right and left on the sea-side, with a view of surrounding us; the center composed of grenadiers and chasseurs advanced towards our front, preceded by some *tirailleurs**, who incommoded us very much. When the enemy was within musket shot, a great number of our

* Tirailleurs are troops which the French have much employed lately, their business is to fire irregularly, and indiscriminately to annoy and harass their enemy. T.

soldiers

soldiers ran on their side, crying, *we are Republicans!* but I did not notice any of M. de Sombreuil's division, nor of the regiment of Hector. M. de Sombreuil ordered us to advance to Fort-Neuf, and there to rally. On our way several of the soldiers likewise left us to re-embark. Multitudes of old men, women and children, who had sought an asylum at Quiberon, were already at the sea-side, and in their too eager precipitation for embarking in the sloops, perished before our eyes. It was indeed a dreadful spectacle! Little occupied at our own personal misfortunes, we could not refrain from dropping tears at the fate of so many victims.

When we arrived at Fort-Neuf, M. de Sombreuil united the remains of the different corps. The English cutter, Lark, anchored near the land, and canonnaded the enemy's central column. The two others still manœuvred to surround us.

In this position M. de Sombreuil advanced alone towards the enemy, making signs with his hand. The column stopped, and General Hoche, who commanded, approached a few steps, followed by two staff-officers: when the following conversation took place.

M. de Sombreuil.

The men whom I command are determined to perish under the ruins of the Fort. But if

you

you will allow them to re-embark, you will spare French blood.

General Hoche.

I cannot permit a re-embarkation : but if you will lay down your arms, you shall be treated as prisoners of war.

M. de Sombreuil.

Are the emigrants included in the capitulation ?

General Hoche.

All who lay down their arms.

After having agreed on the terms of capitulation, General Hoche demanded M. de Sombreuil's name, and being informed, exclaimed !

" For yourself, Sir, I cannot undertake to promise any thing."

M. de Sombreuil.

Indeed it it is not for myself that I wish to capitulate. I shall die content, if I do but save my brave companions in arms. Believe me, I am far from wishing to survive so unfortunate a day.

M. de Sombreuil returned to the Fort and addressed us thus : " Gentlemen, I have obtained " as favorable conditions as circumstances would " admit.—I have promised you shall lay down

" your

" your arms; therefore lay them down, and send " notice for the English cutter to cease canon- " nading."—He hid from us his devoted fate. Some persons who spoke English went to the shore and desired the sloops not to approach, as the troops had capitulated. The Lark still continued her fire, until M. Gery, an officer of the marine, swam to the cutter and desired the firing to cease. Faithful to the terms of capitulation he returned among us, to find, alas! that death from which he might so easily have escaped! His memory will be ever rendered dear by this sublime trait!

Some moments after, three republican officers and a number of soldiers entered the Fort. M. d'Entrechaux, my comrade and friend, never quitted me during this cruel day, I proposed to approach one of the officers, whose appearance inspired me with confidence: " You see, " Sir, said I, how unfortunate we are: I hope " you will avoid all outrage, which would be " more dreadful to us than death itself." The officer, leaning on his horse's neck, replied: " And " how can I be otherwise than afflicted at your " distress? I who have served the same cause, " and who cherish it perhaps as much. But I " found no other protection against tyranny, for " myself and family, than entering the republi-

" can

" can armies. However, I beseech you to em-
" bark, if it is possible." We told him the sloops were sent away, and that we had capitulated. He then engaged us to follow him. We left the Fort just as Tallien entered it on horseback; his pleasing and agreeable countenance indicated nothing insulting. " This is
" a day very little expected," said I—" Yes,
" Sir," answered he with modesty, at the same time approaching and addressing M. de Sombreuil, in a stile of commiseration, " Oh, how
" unfortunate your family is!"—" I would have
" revenged it," said M. de Sombreuil; " but at
" least I know how to bear my misfortunes like
" my family." Shortly after, Tallien ordered the prisoners to be conducted to Ste. Barbe, the head quarters of the army. The republican officers conducted us by a different route.

We passed through the army without even hearing an injurious or disagreeable word: we every where perceived an interest mixed with pity. Arriving at one of the posts, our new friend called the officer, and said to him: " take care
" of these gentlemen, they have used all their
" efforts to spare republican blood." He gave us a friendly adieu and parted. No doubt he had a particular station, for we never saw him again. May this humane and generous man one

day have an opportunity of perusing these lines, and he will there read the profound impression he left in our hearts. The officer he recommended us to intreated us to enter his tent, and offered us some very black bread; he apologised for its quality and quantity. "Our ration," said "he, is little; however I am happy to partake "it with you:" adding in a low voice, "The "republic is a fine thing, but we die with hunger "and are naked.!" Indeed the army was in want of every thing.—"But, said I, we shall have "more to complain of than you."—"Undeceive yourselves, answered he, for you have "here two very powerful recommendations: "you are unfortunate and royalists.—You will "see with what eagerness you will be succoured. "You are in a friendly and hospitable land. "You do not know how much you have been "desired here. I have just been over the province. Mourning was every where we went. "Mothers, in shewing us to their children, cried, "*those are the supporters of that horrible Convention.* It is but too certain you have lost a "very favourable opportunity. If you had had "the smallest success, the standards of the republic would have been abandoned. Tallien "knew it well, and used every exertion to "oblige the troops to attack the Fort."

We

We endeavoured to prolong the conversation with this amiable man, when several republican officers entered the tent, some led by curiosity, and others by interest in our affairs. Their demeanour was decent and polite. Many of them had been imprisoned during the tyranny of Robespierre. They had experienced misfortune, were feeling, and knew how to respect it. They used every effort to chear us, and said, "the army "had heard with joy of our capitulation, and "that no one dare violate it." This conversation enlivened a hope in our minds, and the attention the soldiers paid us kept the animating spark alive: for if they found an officer of the same province or town with themselves, they approached them with eagerness. Not a single trace could be perceived of those ancient prejudices and hatreds, which have caused so many crimes and calamities.

At four o'clock in the afternoon, the general beat—the prisoners were ordered to assemble, and prepare themselves for Aurai.

CHAP. II.

ARRIVAL AND STAY AT AURAI.

THE republican officer conducted us to the place of rendezvous, and recommended us to one of his friends. He promised to inform us of every thing that should pass. "But, added "he, be not uneasy; the public opinion is too "firmly pronounced." All the army had the same confidence. So little was Tallien's perfidy suspected.

At five o'clock, we were placed between two ranks of soldiers, and set off for Aurai. Before our departure, the officer who commanded the escort, told M. de Sombreuil we should be treated with the regard due to prisoners of war, hoping no one would endeavour to escape. The escort was weak, and overcome with fatigue. The bad roads continually forced us to break the ranks, and make our way through the fields. The evening was very dark, and being obliged to stop, the column passed on without me. Two soldiers, who heard me hailing them at a distance, came back and conducted me to the detachment. On our arrival at Aurai, not a single person was missing.

However,

However, the prisoners no longer dissimulated the dangers we ran; but regarding life as nothing, and honour as every thing, they offered the example of an heroic and religious fidelity to their parole.

Before we arrived at Aurai, the officer commanding the escort informed me, we should be confined in the church, and engaged me to enter first, that I might seat myself on a stone bench near the pillar. We arrived at Aurai at half past nine o'clock. All the women were at their windows with lights. I noticed them attentively, and I perceived an expression of the tenderest pity; tears dropped from their eyes. They all surveyed us with grief and fear—seemingly afraid to discover a son, a father, or a friend. The prisoners marched in profound silence, and the night lent her aid to render the picture more august and moving.

We were conducted to the church, and I seated myself on the stone bench. At the same time I perceived M. de Sombreuil standing and looking for a seat. I offered him part of mine. He accepted it, and this was the cause of our acquaintance. He continually talked of the sad event of the day, and freely opened his mind—but made no allusion to the fate that awaited him. Inaccessible to fear, his young and elevated mind

poignantly

poignantly regretted glory alone. Stopped in the first outset of a brilliant career he felt a sincere affliction at not being able to fulfil his promised destiny. This sentiment was frequently tempered with the most affecting remembrances, for he had been torn from the object of his affection before he had attained the endearing name of husband.—Overwhelmed with fatigue we fell asleep. I first awoke and could not without emotion reflect on the manly beauty, youth and forlorn hopes of the gallant Sombreuil.*

At eight o'clock in the morning the municipal officers entered the church to take a list of the officers, and separate them from the soldiers; the noble volunteers of Béon and Damas were excepted. Our number was 575—we were conducted to a house of arrest and placed in seven apartments.

At four o'clock in the afternoon a detachment came and conducted us on the road to l'Orient, where 3,000 men were under arms. In passing through the town we perceived the marks of the greatest grief. The inhabitants fully believed we were going to be sacrificed. Indeed many

* I cannot miss the occasion of confirming the authenticity of M. de Sombreuil's letter to Sir John Warren. He read it to me. He intended likewise to write to the King of England.

amongst

amongst ourselves became convinced of our fate. We were much affected by the spectacle, for I have often felt that the mind fortified by outrages is the most susceptible of pity. The soldiers endeavoured to soften the barbarity of this military march.

At eight o'clock we re-entered the town to the sounds of music which were drowned by the joyful cries of the inhabitants, who brought wine and fruits, faithfully delivered to us by the soldiers.

The 23rd, at eight o'clock in the morning, came in our prison a number of women belonging to the requisition for the service of the place; the requisition appeared to be merely nominal, for it required great credit to be chosen. It was an affecting picture, to see so many fine young women lending, with tender solicitude, assistance to the most toilsome works, with a grace truly charming. A common sentiment of humanity and benevolence seemed to unite the highest and lowest in care and attention towards us.

I perceived in a farther corner of the prison a young person who seemed to be steadily occupied. Her figure was pleasing, and her looks marked with timidity and sensibility. I know not what secret movement prompted me to approach her, for I was far from suspecting the

services

services she afterwards rendered me. "You appear "concerned at our misfortunes," said I.—"Can "one see them without being affected!" replied she in a most tender tone, at the same time shedding tears and adding, "I have a brother emi- "grated whom I dearly love—I am ignorant of "his fate." I knew him well and dissipated her fears. She quitted me after these words, not without observing my clothes, and soon returned with a complete suit, saying, "my aunt has "charged me to take care of you and your "friends—I will come and see you every day— "Believe me, your situation is continually in my "mind." Her goodness affected me; I tenderly closed her hands in mine—nor could I refrain from admiring the happy emotions which nature, at the view of misfortune, imperceptibly and nervously awakens in sensible minds. I felt that if the elevated conceptions of genius are in want of solitude, the great and noble affections of the heart discover themselves most in adversity. I no longer doubted there existed connexions, unperceived it is true in the ordinary concerns of life, which certain situations rapidly develop.—I had been acquainted with Sophia only an hour, yet she was already my friend—already had she done for me every thing that courageous, active friendship could inspire. From the first mo-

ment

ment she never ceased to watch over my fate. The least danger terrified her—her tender anxieties became mixed with the softest consolations, and she comforted me with that pure voluptuousness which Heaven seems to have placed in the heart of a feeling and virtuous woman.

The following days the prison was filled with the inhabitants, who brought us provisions of every kind. The soldiers frequently said to them, "You had nothing for us, but now your dear "royalists are here, you can find every thing."— "Ah, citizens, said they, must we not assist "the distressed?"

On the 27th, I read General Hoche's account to the Convention. His last sentence was, *the emigrants, placed between fire and water, had no other resource but to surrender.* He made no mention of the capitulation; this perfidy alarmed me. I sent notice for Sophia to appear at the lobby; for, after the 26th, no women were allowed to enter the prison. She came directly. I desired her to get information about our fate, and to inform me without disguise. "If "it should be fatal, said she, I never can tell you "of it." — I assured her death would not appal me; at the same time convinced her, that to hinder it, how necessary it was I should be instructed in proper time. We agreed for her to appear in a black veil, if she could not write to me.

CHAP. III.

EXECUTION OF THE BISHOP OF DOL AND M. DE SOMBREUIL.

THE 20th, at two o'clock, a subaltern officer of the gendarmerie came for M. de Sombreuil, M. Joseph de Broglie, M. de la Londel, a chief of the Chouans, the Bishop of Dol, and fourteen priests, to conduct them to Vannes. Their departure alarmed us, but the republican officers allayed our fears. It was even reported that M. de Sombreuil was ordered to Paris. Some minutes after, Sophia came and informed me, the eighteen prisoners were set off for Vannes chained in a cart.

The 29th, several officers of our acquaintance gave us notice, that a commission had been appointed, that it was tolerably well formed, and recommended us to insist on the capitulation.

At eight o'clock, M. de Soulange and fifteen persons were ordered to appear before the commission, who, after examining them, declared to the representative of the people, the prisoners could not be condemned: as, by the acknowledgement

ledgement even of the soldiers, they had made a capitulation.

At two o'clock the republican officers came and told us, they were penetrated with grief and indignation—that they would sooner die than be members of the commission. The general officers seeing the disposition of the army, selected judges among the Belgians and other foreigners.

The 30th, at seven o'clock, General le Moine, a man whose habits and manners were brutal and ferocious, arrived at Vannes. He dissolved the commission of Aurai, and named four others. All the officers having refused, he ordered the army under arms, and threatened to shoot instantly on the spot the first who would not accept his place in the commissions. He chose two among the Belgians and one among the French. Each was composed of a lieutenant colonel, a captain, a sergeant, a corporal and a common man. The first of these commissions was destined for Aurai, the second for Quiberon, and the third for Vannes, where one had been already established to judge M. de Sombreuil.

At seven o'clock I received a note from Sophia, containing only these words, *my heart is torn, save yourself.* And in another hand, some details of the trial and execution of the prisoners at

Vannes. As they are very interesting, I shall transcribe them.

On the 29th, M. de Sombreuil appeared before the commission. After having declared his age, and period of his emigrating, he added: "I "have lived, and I will die a Royalist. Ready "to appear before God, I swear there was a capi- "tulation, and that the emigrants were thereby "engaged to be treated as prisoners of war."—Then turning himself towards the soldiers, who surrounded him, said, "I appeal to your evi- "dence, grenadiers—It was before you that I "capitulated."—"Yes, we attest it," cried they. The Bishop of Dol and the other prisoners were tried the same day. After their condemnation, they passed their night in the Tower.

The next day at ten o'clock, a detachment of the battalion of Paris conducted them to the place of execution. Their hands were tied behind them. M. de Sombreuil remonstrated against this humiliation—*Your King was bound!* said they to him, and he submitted. They were taken to the public walk of Vannes, called the Garenne. M. de Sombreuil walked at the head. His noble and high-spirited countenance contrasted with the calm and meek resignation of the Bishop of Dol—The victim of honour, and the martyr of faith. One despised life, the other

desired

desired death. The inhabitants of Vannes surrounded them with tears: a tender and affecting interest seemed attached to the young warrior—a something religious and sacred to the venerable pontiff. Arrived at the place of execution, they were placed on a line. M. de Sombreuil refused to kneel. The Bishop of Dol begged his head might be uncovered. At the sight of the serenity of his countenance, where a new life seemed to shine forth, the people, seized with a holy respect, were overwhelmed with grief. M. de Sombreuil was presented with a bandage. "No, said he, I "like to see my enemy." When the soldiers presented their muskets, he cried, "point more "to the right, or you will miss me."—Scarce had he uttered these words—and he was no more.

The fate of M. de Sombreuil and the other prisoners left us no hope. The 31st, a detachment of the 72nd regiment came and conducted 150 prisoners to Vannes. I was of the number, with my companions of the regiment of Hector.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

ARRIVAL AT VANNES.

We set off at 10 o'clock in the morning, on foot, and although the distance from Aurai to Vannes is five leagues, yet we accomplished the journey in four hours. Madame Bokozel followed her husband; she never quitted him one moment till his death. The courage of this excellent woman was admirable.—Her cares and considerations were not solely confined to her husband, for her inexhaustible sensibility diffused its influence over us all.

On our arrival at Vannes, we were conducted to the church of the Seminary. It was soon filled with men and women who shewed us the same marks of attention and interest as the good inhabitants of Aurai. We had a profusion of provisions of every kind: they vied with each other who should be preferred in gaining acceptance of their offers. The poor and the rich were mixed together, without distinction. This equality was truly affecting, nor did it cease to draw from us tears of gratitude. The horror of our situation disappeared — and a sweet illusion gave charms

charms even to our chains. We found our native country in our prison. We again found that people, such as they were in the days of glory and happiness, tender, humane, and generous. Each of us had the comfort of saying to himself, *I shall not die at least in a foreign land*, and drew courage from the thought. Exiled a second time from my country, the remembrance has still a charm which I cannot describe.

We were one hundred and fifty in the church, the greatest part officers of the navy: I was kept there from July 31 to August 3. Those four days have left an impression in my heart, which time can never eradicate. Every thing in this temple presented the image of death—Here an infant slept by the side of an aged veteran, who continually eyed him with the tenderest regard—There the father clasped his son in his arms—Farther on, a husband moistened with his tears the last words he wrote to his beloved wife—There two friends embraced each other, vowing never to separate. If any were called for examination, or rather death, all wished to follow and pronounce at once an eternal adieu!

To these pictures of grief and terror, sometimes succeeded mild and gentler scenes.—We formed ourselves in different groups.—A captain of a man of war lay on straw, surrounded by officers

officers who had fought under his command.—The serious thoughts of old age, and the pleasing remembrance of others, took up by turns the discourse. Frequently these conversations were animated by the most lively effusions of friendship. Often the recollections of riper age were interrupted by the gaiety of young men, or the games of children: but in the variety of tones, ideas and affections, the same resignation was distinguished—and in this place, where death was hovering over us, the victims alone were tranquil. The inhabitants of Vannes were moved with the most heartfelt pity.—Never surely was made a more awful impression, than when after a public prayer, as if by holy inspiration, we raised our hands and voices to demand of Heaven the happiness of France. The soldiers on guard were struck with astonishment and admiration, but sentiments of religion reviving in their hearts, they came in the midst of us, and interrupted our prayers by their lamentations.

July 31st, ten persons were tried.—August 1st, sixty, and on the 2d forty others. A republican officer, present at the trials, told me, they astonished the spectators by their firmness, and the dignity of their answers. Not the least mark of weakness dropped from either of them. One of my comrades, M. de Tronjolly, said to his

his judges: "I claim your justice for my ser-
"vant. When I left France he was ignorant of
"my purposes. He never bore arms. I alone
"am answerable for his emigration." Another, M. de Coatudavel, whose appearance was very young and agreeable, presented himself before the tribunal; and on his age being asked, replied, he was thirty. One of his judges, touched by a movement of sensibility, cried, "impossible, "Sir, you do not appear to be twenty."—"I will "not redeem my life with a lie," answered M. de Coatudavel.

August 12th, seventy were condemned to be shot together, and the day after, forty more. We heard the discharge of the musquetry. At the fatal report we were all seized with horror. A priest, who was with us, recited in a loud voice the prayers for the dead.

In retracing these barbarous executions, my heart still shudders. Never were immolated at once so many interesting victims. In a moment perished every thing that inspired respect, admiration and love. Nothing was spared—not even venerable age, nor eminent services, the greatest talents, the most splendid virtue, or the tenderest youth. The royal navy lost one hundred officers,*

* In the number of officers which I could cite, Mess. de Soulange and de Froger, ought to be distinguished; one by

many of them the ornaments and hopes of that service. Alas! my unfortunate companions! I have survived, always to regret you—Fain would I consecrate your loyal names—but can I ever honour them enough?—Another homage awaits your memory, and I do but conceive the happy presage. A day will come, when entering our deserted arsenals, Frenchmen, terrified at the solitude that reigns around, will demand of us where are gone those officers that supported the glory of their country in two worlds. We will tell them: "those men, whom time and the "sword of the enemy had spared, perished by "the hands of tyrants—Go to their tombs, and "let the standard they honoured wave gently "over their graves, so shall their ashes be con-"soled."

There remained forty persons in the church who obtained a delay of their sentence: which the representative of the people, Blad, had granted to servants, and those who had not attained the age of seventeen, or who left France before 1789. The next chapter will account how I was included in the number.

his long and honourable services, the other by his great knowledge in all parts of the marine, particularly naval tactics, which had already rendered him worthy succeeding M. du Pavillon.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

MY EXAMINATION.

AUGUST 1st, at twelve o'clock, a republican officer, whom I knew at Aurai, entered the church with one of his comrades.—"What, "cries he, do you still live?" adding, "this is "my friend, who is no less afflicted than my-"self at your situation. Our duty obliges "us to depart. We will return again at night. "In the mean time, if any persons are called "for examination, do not present yourself." They returned at four o'clock, when the officer who had been introduced to me in the morning considered me attentively. I thought I recollected his features. We had been educated together at the College of * * *. The remembrance of the pleasing scenes of our younger years aroused at once all the sentiments of nature, and he threw himself in my arms, crying, "No, my "friend, you shall not die."—He could not pronounce another word, but overwhelmed me with his tears. His companion dragged him from me, saying, "You are moved too much, the soldiers "on guard will suspect us. To-morrow we

" will breakfast here, and contrive with more " composure the means to obtain delay. It will " be something to gain time."

On the day following, the two officers came to see me at seven o'clock in the morning. We placed ourselves in a remote part of the church. I wished to expres all my gratitude to my fellow collegian—"What, said he, talk of gratitude! tell " me of my happiness." We again called to recollection all the moments of our early affection. These conversations have always so many charms. But my situation spread a melancholy around us. Ready to cast my last regard on life, I reflected on that age when pleasures are no more than play things, and the passions but innocent desires—when friendship, the tender commerce of two young hearts, had all the purity and freshness of a first sentiment.

An hour had been already spent in these effusions, and with what pain did we finish! During this time, my friend could not cease admiring my fellow prisoners. He said these executions inspired universal horror, that the strongest menaces could alone determine the soldiers to execute them.

After this conversation we planned the answers I should make before the tribunal. It was likewise agreed, that I should demand to be examined

mined the first, and that I should take the name of * * *, under which I was but little known, but which would be sufficient to make me be recognized by my family, if I could get a delay of my sentence.

August 3d, at seven o'clock in the morning, I presented myself with all who were sent for to be examined. The commission was held at the Hôtel de Gouvello.

The following are the details of my examination. I was opposite the president, the gallery was behind me, and there might be present one hundred persons.

Q. What's your name, citizen ?—*A.* * * *.

Q. At what period did you emigrate ?—*A.* I never did emigrate. I left France before the Revolution.

Q. Have you born arms against the Republic ?—*A.* No.

Q. But you was at the expedition of Quiberon ?—*A.* True, but I was not employed in a military capacity.

Q. Was you of the order of nobility ?—*A.* No.

Q. What were the reasons, citizen, that forced you to quit France ?—*A.* I left France in the year 1789, to gain in England a recovery of monies in the name of the house of * * *, whose property

property was at St. Domingo. I embarked at Nantes in the month of May. I entered the service of Mr. Wrewendem, a merchant. I staid there some time, until the worthy man, who acted like a father towards me, becoming a bankrupt, was obliged to go to Scotland. I then left him. I could not come to France during the tyranny of Robespierre.—Being at London without any means of living, the quarter-master of the French regiments offered me a situation to keep his accounts, and I accepted it. When we set sail, I imagined it was for Jersey. No sooner had I arrived at Quiberon, than I prepared to return to England at the time the Fort was taken. Citizen, if I had not lost my papers, with my effects, I could give proofs of what I advance. But I beg in justice you will allow me time to procure them.

Q. Citizen, was the merchant with whom you lived of the Opposition party?—*A.* I am ignorant of his political opinions.

The president then addressed me with mildness, saying, " be comforted, for justice shall " be done you." At these words, the people in the galleries, who had hitherto preserved a melancholy silence, applauded with the greatest enthusiasm. I went through the appartment where my fellow prisoners were, and begged of them not

not to seem to know me. M. d'Entrechaux passed for my servant. At twelve o'clock the commission broke up, every one being examined.

At one o'clock, Sophia came, with one of her friends to enquire for me. She pronounced in a loud voice the name of Chaumereix—this might have proved fatal—I instantly approached the window, and said: "The citizen whom you ask "for is not here: go to the house of arrest to-"night, and citizen * * * will give you news "about him." She was so affected, that she did not understand the meaning of my words; but her friend did and took her away.

From twelve o'clock till four, I was with all those who had been examined. In approaching death they became more calm.—M. de Payen, a young gentleman of the navy, who was only six months too old for the delay of sentence, declared his age, although his appearance was extremely young. The president of the tribunal insisted in vain for him—he could not save him.

At four o'clock the detachment charged with the execution arrived. The recorder called over the names of the condemned. The name of M. le N—— having been wrong transcribed on the register, that gentleman made no answer.—The officer passed on to the others, and was going,

ing, when M. le N—— said, "Certainly it was "my name you pronounced!"—and followed his companions.

When the summons was made, a corporal bound their hands behind them. And to add to the horror of the spectacle, they were preceded by their grave-diggers. Twenty-eight was the number destined for death.—Twelve obtained a respite; M. d'Entrechaux and myself, were included in the latter.—When our unfortunate friends turned towards us for their final adieu, saying, *Do not forget us, we are happy to see you saved*; instead of feeling any happiness at our situation, new sentiments arose in our minds, and we were ready to betray ourselves, and demand to go with them.—Distracted by remorse, and torn by grief, we felt torments still more cruel than that death from which we had escaped.—In half an hour after we heard the fatal discharge *.

* From the different accounts of the spectators who witnessed these horrible executions, it should seem, that amidst the courage and composure of the victims, it was hardly possible to select one more heroic than another.—But the firmness of M. de Kergariou-Loëmaria, a very distinguished officer, astonished even his companions.—His brother, major of the regiment du Dresnay, had already perished in the affair of the 16th.—His nephew, M. de Lage de Volude, a very agreeable young gentleman, was shot at three times before he was killed.——What adds to the inconceivable barbarity of these atrocious massacres is, the situation of those who were wounded—not being able to walk to the place of execution, they were shot on their mattresses.

and almost at the same instant, we saw the bleeding remains of our friends pass under our eyes—I swooned away.—Dreadful fantoms surrounded me, and it was in vain that I endeavoured to gain repose.—At length, after a long agitation, I heard a voice that calmed my wandering senses. —It was Sophia who entered the Hôtel, and whom I did not before perceive.

Those who had obtained a respite from the different commissions, were transferred the next day to the Tower of Vannes.—We were 108. †

CHAP. VI.

MY CONFINEMENT IN THE TOWER OF VANNES, AND ESCAPE.

MY two friends came to see me in the Tower. —I will not attempt to describe their joy, suffice it to say, they were happier than myself. As they were obliged to depart from Vannes on the following day, they gave me their company most of the day. How pleasing the time we spent together, and how affecting was our se-

† Several names in this chapter have been marked with asterisks, in order to prevent any disagreeable consequences happening to the respective families.—M. de Chaumereix belonged to the Royal Navy of France. T.

 paration!

paration! Tender and generous friends—You have left in my heart a long remembrance.—Led by a different fate, we fought not under the same standard, but you thought you served your country—Dreadful illusion, which glory seems but to prolong, and which has too long served your able tyrants!—But amidst so many crimes, you have remained virtuous and pure!—If I fought against the Revolution, you softened its misfortunes!

The 6th, a republican soldier to whom M. d'Entrechaux had given his purse at the capture of the Fort, learning he had not perished, came and returned it to him.

Every thing remained quiet until the 16th, when some Chouan chiefs contrived to send notice to the prisoners, that if they would revolt, they would advance in the night and second them.—Two thousand prisoners were then in the town, and only six hundred soldiers to guard them. The plot was discovered by two soldiers of the regiment of Hervilly. Cannon were instantly placed at the doors, and seven of the Chouan chiefs were shot on the spot.

The next day General le Moine came to the Tower, and gave notice, that on the least movement he would fire grape-shot amongst us. The

language

language of this ferocious man filled the soldiers with indignation.

The 18th, the representative Blad arrived at Vannes. He permitted the inhabitants to enter as before, from eight till twelve in the morning, and from two till eight in the afternoon. He was eager in comforting all those who had any relations amongst us, and seemed to have no uneasiness about our fate. I believe he really thought so.—We already were indebted to him for the respite, besides, he did every thing to meliorate our situation.

General le Moine had encamped the soldiers, who were prisoners, on the public walk, opposite to us. We could even be known by those of our regiment. We began to consider on means of escaping. It was necessary to find a house in the town where we could be received. The landlady of one indicated to us, waited for us eight days: she slept on a mattrass behind the street door for that purpose.

Two centinels were stationed very near us, and under our windows. One of the public days one of them said to his comrade, " I will lay a wager " I know the patriots from the royalists;" and seeing a woman pass by whose appearance was noble, cried, " is it not true, citizen, that you are

" a patriot ?"—" Yes, replied she, like Charette," and the soldiers fell a laughing.

Sophia had been ill ever since the 16th.—She came to see me on the 20th.—She had the most dreadful forebodings. She continually represented to me, that the dangers I might run in hazarding an escape, were far less than those we were exposed to in staying.

The 27th, nothing yet transpired.—The 28th, twelve persons were ordered for examination. I was far from being enabled to furnish proofs of what I had advanced on my examination, and I soon learnt the Convention had sent orders for every body to be shot, not even excepting the servants.

We began to occupy all our time to avoid that death which seemed now to be certain. At the top of the Tower, directly under the roof, there was a little place which I had perceived for some days. We lost no time, but mounted with our mattrasses, recommending our friends to say we had been tried, and to publish our death with some particular circumstances.

About twelve o'clock the prisoners were sent for, and at four we heard distinctly the report of musquetry. At seven the rest were sent for.—I heard the officer ask, *if no body else was there?* —He was answered, *no.*

Let

Let our situation for a moment be described.—In a square space of six feet, obliged to be standing, and hid behind our mattrasses, scarcely daring to breathe, and fearing every moment to be discovered.—In this manner we passed two days, suffering every minute all the horrors of death. I must not omit the following remarkable anecdote. After the execution of the prisoners, the inhabitants came into the Tower, to claim the different things they had brought for our service, which was refused them. "What, cried they, "after having massacred those unfortunate peo-"ple, you want to rob us."—A low kind of woman, more enraged than the rest, discovered the place where we were, seized hold of one of the mattrasses, and having seen us, cried out, at the same time going away, *Oh no, I am mistaken, I have nothing here.*

At nine o'clock we made our escape from the Tower disguised. * The house for our reception being badly described to us, we were obliged to find another; upon which we immediately expected a discovery. "Fear nothing, said the "master, I see you are some of the unfortunate "emigrants—my house is at your service—stay "here."—Our tears bespoke out thanks and sen-

* From the best information, I presume fifteen or twenty persons may have escaped from the prisons.

sibility.

sensibility. He conducted us to the house we should have gone to, where we were secreted from the 30th of August till the 17th of September.

We have omitted several details of our escape, fearful lest our benefactors should be discovered and exposed to the rage of our assassins.

CHAP. VII.

MY ARRIVAL AT THE ENGLISH SQUADRON.

THE 17th, it was proposed for us to seize the opportunity of gaining the English fleet. We, M. d'Entrechaux and myself, went to a house out of the town. On the morrow, two women came in search of us, and we disguised ourselves in the dress of the country people.

At nine o'clock, we set out, and after travelling a league, we saw four men spring from a hedge armed with bludgeons ironed at the end, who spoke to us, laughing, "I'faith, if you "had been blues * you were undone, but we "know who you are." We continued our journey, and after four hours we arrived at the first village. One of the women conducted us to a house: she spoke to our host some words in Bas-

* Meaning the republican soldiers.

Breton,

Breton,* and they provided us a dinner. When we came away, these worthy people heaped blessings upon us—and it was impossible for us to persuade them to let us pay for what we had had. We were obliged to cross a river to reach the village where we were to sleep; as we were just crossing, we heard some Chouans cry out, *the blues are coming*. We stopped for some time, and we saw a detachment of twelve soldiers pass us who came from the village, where we then entered. The person to whom we were recommended, said to us, "You will set off to-mor-" row at ten o'clock for the place where you will " embark—I will provide two men to conduct " you. One shall go before to give you notice " when any patroles pass." We directly heard a noise—it was another detachment entering the next house. We hid ourselves in a barn, and on the morrow we set off early with our conductors. We passed over fields, hedges and heaths, and after a two hours fatiguing journey, arrived at the place of our destination, where we were expected. We stopped there till the night of the 20th, when a boat came and conducted us to the English squadron at eight o'clock in the morning. Sir

* The provincial jargon—It very much resembles the Welch language. T.

John

John Borlase Warren expressed great attention to us. Some time after, Captain Bertie came on board the Commodore (for I had already been on board the Thunderer) and engaged me to return to his ship. I found the same marks of attention and politeness which the officers of the fleet had shewn towards our corps.

I received a letter from Sophia, concluding with these words—*Fly from this unfortunate land.* —This tender friend sent me all the money she could dispose of.

Amiable Sophia! thou hast done more than snatched me from death—thou hast embellished the days that grief would have disgraced.—I for ever bear in my exile thy sweet and consoling image. If I should ever see again my dear native land, Sophia, thou hast my heart! and my life shall be wholly dedicated to thee.

OBSER-

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

PUBLIC OPINION IN BRITTANY.

THE origin of the Chouans is well known. They were formed from the remains of la Vendée after the battle of Mans. They are scattered in eleven departments, comprehending Britanny, Maine, Anjou, and a part of Normandy. Those of Vitré are the most warlike. There is at Grand-Champ a corps of three thousand men, which may be regarded as the heart of this great multitude. Another corps of the same strength is near Sarzeau. They are partly composed from the seamen. The Chouans, whose number may amount to eighty thousand men, are not, like the army of la Vendée, regularly organized. Dispersed over a vast extent of country, they do not obey one chief only.—They however acknowledge different commanders; and a council, at the head of which presides at this moment M. de Puisaye, regulates their movements, and in some measure, keeps them in order.

The Chouan war against the republicans is very cruel. Secreted during the day, they unite themselves at night, gain intelligence in the villages, and frequently surprise whole detachments. I saw thirty dragoons depart from Vannes, and only seven returned at night. They brought with them only one prisoner wounded, he was a very stout man and wore a white cockade.

Several officers assured me that since they had taken up arms again, twelve thousand republican soldiers had been killed. This war, confined to endless bloody and obscure battles, is singularly repugnant to the army.

In going from Vannes to the spot where I embarked, I passed the night with an old man—"There, said he, are one hundred and fifty "cartouches. — Both my sons are with the "Chouans; but it is time it was finished—there "are not children enough—the fathers must "march." I met a great number of Chouans on the road, who had been previously informed of my route. I had a great deal of conversation with them; and I observed in the whole a general and profound hatred against the blues and the republican government. They demanded of me news of their ancient lords, for whom they have an extraordinary attachment; they desire and call for them back again.—"If

"they

" they were but with us, said they, things would " be otherwise; but now we have nobody to " command us." It is but truth to add, that M. de Puisaye appeared to be very much in their confidence.

The Quiberon expedition has given an opinion of the Chouans which I believe to be absolutely false: they should have been employed in the nature of war they had hitherto been used to, or they should have been organized and exercised. Neither one or the other have been done.

The result of these observations will be, that the Chouans, without having the eclat or the glory of la Vendée, are perhaps the most dangerous enemies of the Republic, from their occupying a country of such extent and importance: royalism and ideas of religion prevail among them with as much force as in la Vendée. They wanted a la Roche Jaquelin, a Charettte, &c.

The army of General Hoche consisted only of seven or eight thousand men.—I paid great attention in remarking the spirit that reigned in it. The war being prolonged, has actually confirmed, what was foretold by many enlightened men, that the army would by degrees become more abstracted from political questions, and that military ideas would eventually predominate. Thus the clubs and orators that occasioned General

Dumourier's despair, are no longer to be seen. St. Just established in 1793, in the army of Alsace, a discipline which the commissioners of the Convention since perfected in all the armies of the Republic. The code of this triumvirate would have astonished Frederick himself—The soldiers obeying these terrible laws is a prodigy, which can no otherwise be explained than by the concourse of ideas of liberty and their country, which fortifies command, and those ideas of equality which softens the difference of ranks!

The presence of the commissioners of the Convention in the armies has contributed still more to maintain that discipline; it has reduced their generals to a simple execution of the plan traced by the committee of war.—Every thing that could give them influence was in the hands of the commissioners. — The consequence has been, that these generals, without consideration, without power, passing from one army to another, have not communicated to any their own particular opinions, and nothing has remained but that national sentiment which has so strongly attached the soldiers to the defence of their country. Thus has the Convention known how to avoid the dangers which ruined the Roman Senate. No dependance ought therefore to be placed on the intervention of the army relative to the form

of

of government; obedient to the prevailng power, it has only one view, and that is for peace. Many ardent and ambitious individuals may regret the rapid and brilliant chances of the war, but the officers pant after the peaceable enjoyment of their ranks, and the soldiers of the requisition burn to re-enter their native homes—And those eight hundred thousand men, whose reaction in the interior appears so alarming for the present government, will be easily reduced to the ordinary state of peace.

It is on the public spirit alone that our hopes should rest, and the change operated in France, in this respect, is immense. The circle of popular ideas has run its course. Europe has been completely duped with the new system of moderation. It has been attributed to the Convention. It was not perceived, that the party which overturned Robespierre had at first no other idea than to save itself from the proscription that menaced it, and to seize on power—soon obliged to conform to the general opinion, it has since been constantly employed in arresting its progress. The public opinion always went farther than the Convention in every measure of justice and humanity. Tired at length with the contest, it has openly abjured the system of moderation: and the last days of its fatal existence were marked

by

by decrees worthy a Robespierre.—Its tyranny will still appear under new forms. It was by the mouth of the cannon that the constitution was proclaimed, and it was signed by the blood of four thousand citizens.

Oh my country! I am ignorant of thy great destiny.—But tyranny cannot long reign there —where I have seen so many virtues.—Yes, yet may thou become the happy and brilliant retreat of liberty and glory.—May shortly perish even the remembrance of our fatal divisions: Six years of calamities ought to appease every hatred. —Frenchmen, reunite in one view, in one sentiment.—Prepare by your wisdom and courage, the day your tyrants fear—that consolating day, when every error shall be forgiven, every fault pardoned, and crime abandoned to remorse.

THE END.

6 AP 67

LONDON, NOV. 30, 1795.

The Translator of the preceding Narrative, adds, only as a matter of curiosity, the prospectus of a new invention, by MESS. MEMIEU *and* SICARD, *gentlemen of established reputation in Paris—But such persons as wish to subscribe for a copy of this work, may have it as soon as it will be published in Paris, by inscribing their names at* T. Baylis's, *Printer, No.* 15, *Greville-Street, Holborn. Price One Guinea, Half a Guinea to be paid on subscribing, and the other Half on delivery.*

PASIGRAPHY,

OR,

FIRST ELEMENTS

OF THE

ART OF PRINTING AND WRITING IN A LANGUAGE SO AS TO BE UNDERSTOOD IN ALL LANGUAGES WITHOUT TRANSLATION.

PROSPECTUS.

This art, absolutely new, is not confined to the utility of *Tachygraphy*, *Stenography*, or writing solely abridged or expeditious—*Pasigraphy*, from *πᾶσι to all* and *γράφω I write*, will not explain the sounds of any known language but the sense of the words of every language, even of that which people have never learnt: and its elements will consist only of twelve characters (which will neither be nor replace A, B, &c.) and in twelve general rules which will never suffer the least exception whatever.

The astonishing simplicity of the means of this art, its innumerable advantages, and the importance of its consequences, are submitted to the mature reflexions of enlightened minds, to statesmen, merchants, bankers, printers, literary and learned men, as well as to the curious of all countries. The result of this discovery will be, that if two correspondents, French and English for instance, knowing only their maternal language, learn to write in Pasigraphy, from that moment the Frenchman will read and understand in French what the Englishman could only write and express in English—and the Englishman will read and comprehend in English what the

the Frenchman could only write and express in French. The same lines may be read and understood at once by an Englishman, a German, an Italian, a Spaniard, and a Russian—although the writer had only traced it in his own language, and although he knew not a single word of the others.—Thus at the end of a very few hours, any intelligent person may *pasigraph* his own idiom, by consulting the method, characters, and the twelve invariable rules—which exercise will place in his memory, before he has even thought of studying them.

An Art so much wanted, and reduced to combinations so easy, waited, in order to become experimental, the concurrence of a man the most profoundly skilled in the usual metaphysics of the transmission of thoughts.—No person existing could so well aid the inventor in realizing his conceptions; he therefore communicated his work to Mr. Sicard, the Director of the celebrated Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, who has testified how much he has been struck with what this invention presented new to him; with the analogy of a similar discovery: with the labours he himself is continually devoting his time to, and with the extent this new Art will give to success already so prodigious. The Inventor therefore thinks, he cannot give a better

guarantee

guarantee or pledge of confidence to Europe, than in announcing, that the worthy successor of the celebrated Abbé *de l'Epée*, (who has perfected his Institution, who has known how to add to the conception of that immortal genius) has taken upon him to put in practice the most essential part of *Pasigraphy*, and has had the generosity to declare, that it will be an additional source of instruction for those committed to his care. The triple end of M. Sicard is, to oblige a friend—mutually to open a rich mine to the Arts, to Commerce, and the Sciences—and still to ameliorate the admirable and national establishment he directs—The only one perhaps that true philosophy has consecrated in our times, without calamities, to the happiness of mankind!

Pasigraphy, superbly printed on the finest paper, in large octavo, will appear as soon as the subscriptions will defray the expences of the engravings, punchions, matrices, and fount, of a typography the more dear, as it must be totally new—and, notwithstanding its extreme simplicity, will require very able compositors, as the perfection of the types will in like manner require the skill of the greatest artists.

6 AP 67

DE MÉMIEU.